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Heart Disease Health Center

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Symptoms of Heart Disease

Coronary artery disease, congestive heart failure, [heart attack](#) -- each type of [heart problem](#) requires different treatment. They may share similar warning signs. It is important to see your doctor so that you can receive a correct diagnosis and treatment.

Learn to recognize the symptoms that may signal heart disease. Call your doctor if you begin to have new symptoms that become more frequent or severe.

Symptoms of Coronary Artery Disease

The most common symptom of coronary artery disease is [angina](#), or [chest pain](#). Angina can be described as a discomfort, heaviness, pressure, aching, burning, fullness, squeezing, or painful feeling in your chest. It can be mistaken for indigestion or [heartburn](#). Angina may also be felt in the shoulders, arms, neck, throat, jaw, or back.

Other symptoms of coronary artery disease include:

Shortness of breath.

Palpitations (irregular heart beats, or a "flip-flop" feeling in your chest).

A faster heartbeat.

Weakness or dizziness.

Nausea.

Sweating.

Symptoms of a Heart Attack

Symptoms of a heart attack can include:

Discomfort, pressure, heaviness, or pain in the chest, arm, or below the breastbone.

Discomfort radiating to the back, jaw, throat, or arm.

Fullness, indigestion, or choking feeling (may feel like heartburn).

Sweating, [nausea](#), vomiting, or dizziness.

Should You Take Aspirin?

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It has been well documented that aspirin reduces the risk of heart disease in people with known coronary artery disease (CAD). It is also understood that aspirin lowers the risk of having symptoms for people who have a higher risk for the disease. People who are at high risk for coronary artery disease or have coronary artery disease may benefit the most from aspirin therapy.

You can take aspirin to help prevent a heart attack. After you call other emergency services, take adult-strength aspirin (325 mg) if you are not allergic to aspirin for any other reason than that you have a bleeding disorder. Aspirin slows blood clotting, so a blood clot that is causing a heart attack stays smaller.

[Read more about aspirin and your heart](#)

Related to heart attack
coronary artery disease, congestive heart failure, atherosclerosis, clogged arteries

Extreme weakness, [anxiety](#), or shortness of breath.

Rapid or irregular heartbeats.

[cardiovascular disease](#), [c](#)
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During a [heart attack](#), symptoms typically last 30 minutes or longer and are not relieved by rest or oral [medications](#). Initial symptoms may start as a mild discomfort that progresses to significant pain.

Some people have a heart attack without having any symptoms, which is known as a "silent" myocardial infarction. It occurs more often in people with diabetes.

If you think you are having a heart attack, DO NOT DELAY. Call for emergency help (dial 911 in most areas). Immediate treatment of a heart attack is very important to lessen the amount of damage to your heart.

Symptoms of Arrhythmias

When symptoms of [arrhythmias](#), or an abnormal heart rhythm, are present, they may include:

Palpitations (a feeling of skipped heart beats, fluttering or flip-flops in your chest).

Pounding in your chest.

[Dizziness](#) or feeling light-headed.

[Fainting](#).

Shortness of breath.

Chest discomfort.

Weakness or [fatigue](#) (feeling very tired).

Symptoms of Atrial Fibrillation

[Atrial fibrillation](#) (AF) is a type of [arrhythmia](#). Most people with AF experience one or more of the following symptoms:

Heart palpitations (a sudden pounding, fluttering, or racing feeling in the heart).

Lack of energy.

Dizziness (feeling faint or light-headed).

Chest discomfort (pain, pressure, or discomfort in the chest).

Shortness of breath (difficulty breathing during normal activities).

Some patients with [atrial fibrillation](#) have no symptoms. Sometimes these episodes are brief.

1 | 2 | 3 [NEXT PAGE >](#)

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1 [Overview & Facts](#)

2 [Symptoms & Types](#)

3 [Diagnosis & Tests](#)

4 [Treatment & Care](#)

5 [Living & Managing](#)

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